GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2416
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2002
PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN
RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the United Nations proclamation for the decade 2001-2010 as the International decade for Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the children of the World, Government have drawn out elaborate programmes for children of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT [PROF. RITA VERMA]

(a) to (c) :- The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the year 2000 as the "International Year for the Culture of Peace" and the decade 2001-2010 as the "International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World". UNESCO was entrusted with the task of mobilizing Member States and Associate Members and co-ordinating the programme and activities of the United Nations Agencies and other International Organizations. Accordingly UNESCO requested all National Commissions to undertake a series of activities which could contribute to spreading the message of 'Culture of Peace'. The year was formally launched world wide on 14.9.1999 which was the opening day of the last Session of the UN General Assembly in the 20th Century and was designated as International day of Peace.

The Culture of Peace and Non-Violence is not something new to our country. Bearing this in mind, The Indian National Commission launched the year with a function where Education Secretary gave an address on 'Culture of Peace' and the famous classical dancer Ms. Sonal Mansinghgave a performance on the theme of Peace before an International audience and the guests signed the Culture of Peace manifesto. All the State Governments, Associated Schools, UNESCO Clubs, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan were also requested to organize activities on the Culture of Peace and to sign the Culture of Peace Manifesto. The Manifesto was also signed by the Prime Minister at a simple ceremony at PM House. Apart from the activities undertaken by the State Governments, Associated Schools, UNESCO Clubs, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan a major International Youth Forum on Cultural Heritage was jointly organized from 28th December, 2000 to 2nd January, 2001 by the Indian National Commission and the Delhi Public Schools, R.K. Puram. In addition, the Indian National Commission organized 10 Workshops on the Culture of Peace at Gurgaon, Faridabad, Shimla, Dehradun, Jammu, Patna, Kolasib Bhopal, Pataudi and Delhi with a view to associating the NGOs, students and UNESCO Clubs etc. with the Culture of Peace movement.

On the recommendation of the Indian National Commission the Brahma Kumari's signed an agreement with UNESCO for participation in the movement. By employing a Task Force of four thousands volunteers over a period of 7 months they collected over 35 million signatures in India alone for the Manifesto of Culture of Peace.

A UNESCO Chair on Culture of Peace & Non-Violence has been functioning since 1999 at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal.

As regards the `International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World` each year is required to be marked with a different priority and for 2001, UNESCO had suggested that the emphasis be given to the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations and the International year of Mobilization against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance. During the UNESCO's General Conference held in October-November, 2001 the President of the Indian National Commission conveyed India's intention to organize an International Conference on Dialogue among Civilizations, which was accepted by the Director General. Further details for organizing the Conference are being worked out.

The Commission is organising a series of lectures in connection with the `International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World`. Two such lectures - one by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the other by Acharya Vidyanandji Muniraj were organized during the last year.

The City Montessori School, Lucknow has been awarded the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education for 2002 `in recognition of its efforts to promote the universal values of education for peace and tolerance and to renew the principles of secularism at a time when these values and principles are increasingly being challenged.